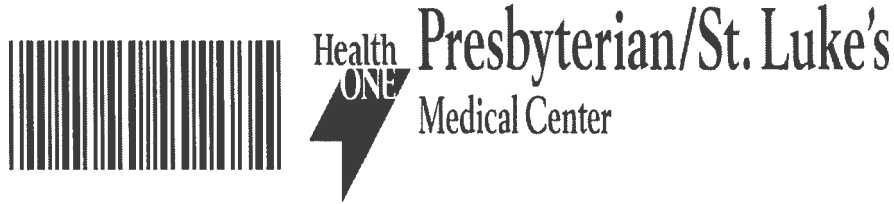


Presbyterian/St. Luke's
Medical Center

The Patient was given access to the following documents on Jul 23, 2018

SAFE USE OF OPIOIDS - Discharge Care, English

Presbyterian/St. Luke's Medical Center
1719 E. 19th Avenue
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Safe Use of Opioids

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW:

An opioid is a type of medicine used to treat pain. Examples of opioids are oxycodone, morphine, fentanyl, or codeine. Pain control and management may help you rest, heal, and return to your daily activities. You and your family will receive information about how to manage your pain at home. The instructions will include what to do if you have side effects as your pain is managed. It will also include information about how to handle opioid medicine safely. It is important to follow all instructions so your pain is managed effectively.

DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS:

Call 911 or have someone call 911 for any of the following:

- You are breathing slower than normal, or you have trouble breathing.
- You cannot be woken.
- You have a seizure.

Seek care immediately if:

- Your heart is beating slower than usual.
- Your heart feels like it is jumping or fluttering.
- You are so sleepy that you cannot stay awake.
- You have severe muscle pain or weakness.
- You see or hear things that are not real.

Contact your healthcare provider if:

- You are too dizzy to stand up.
- Your pain gets worse or you have new pain.
- You cannot do your usual activities because of side effects from the opioid.
- You are constipated or have abdominal pain.

- You cannot stop vomiting.
- You have questions or concerns about your condition or care.

Take opioid medicines as directed, for the condition it is prescribed: Common problems that may occur when you do not take opioid medicines as directed include the following:

- **Health problems** may occur. You may have trouble breathing. You may also develop liver or kidney damage, or stomach bleeding. Any of these health problems can become life-threatening.
- **Opioid dependence** means your body needs the opioid medicine to keep it from going through withdrawal.
- **Opioid tolerance** means the opioid does not control pain as well as it used to. You need higher doses of the opioid to get pain relief.
- **Opioid addiction** means you are not able to control the use of the opioid medicine. You use it when you do not have pain. You crave the opioid medicine.

Opioid safety measures:

- **Take your medicine as directed.** Ask if you need more information on how to take your medicine correctly. Follow up with your healthcare provider regularly. You may need to have your dose adjusted. Do not use opioid medicine if you are pregnant or breastfeeding. Opioid medicine can transfer to your baby through your blood and breast milk.
- **Do not suddenly stop taking opioid pain medicine.** If you have been taking opioid pain medicine for longer than 2 weeks, a sudden stop may cause dangerous side effects. Ask your healthcare provider for more information before you stop taking your medicine.
- **Give your healthcare provider a list of all your medicines.** Include any over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbs. It can be dangerous to take opioids with certain other medicines, such as antihistamines.
- **Keep opioid medicine in a safe place.** Store your opioid medicine in a locked cabinet to keep it away from children and others.
- **Do not drink alcohol while you use opioids.** Alcohol with an opioid medicine can make you sleepy and slow your breathing rate. You may stop breathing completely.
- **Do not mix opioids with alcohol, sleeping pills, or street drugs.** The combination of these substances can cause an overdose.
- **Learn about the signs of an overdose so you know how to respond.** Tell others about these signs so they will know what to do if needed. Talk to your healthcare provider about naloxone. You may be able to keep naloxone at home in case of an overdose. Your family and friends can also be trained on how to give it to you if needed.

- **Do not drive or operate heavy machinery after you take opioid medicine.** Opioid medicine can make you drowsy and make it hard to concentrate. You may injure yourself or others if you drive or operate heavy machinery while taking your medicine.
- **Prevent constipation.** Drink more liquids and eat more high-fiber foods to help prevent constipation. Ask your healthcare provider what liquids are right for you and how much you should drink. Also ask for a list of foods that contain fiber.
- **Follow instructions for what to do with medicine you do not use.** Your healthcare provider will give you instructions for how to dispose of opioid pain medicine safely. This helps make sure no one else takes the medicine.

Follow up with your healthcare provider as directed: You may need to have your dose adjusted. You may be referred to a pain specialist. Write down your questions so you remember to ask them during your visits.

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